

**REMARKS/ARGUMENTS**

Claims 1-5, 8-11, 13-20, 22-28 and 31-33 are currently pending in this application, as amended. By the present amendment, claims 1, 3, 9, 13, 14, 15, 18, 23 and 24 have been amended and claims 6, 7, 12, 21, 29 and 30 have been canceled. Applicant respectfully submits that no new matter has been introduced into the application by these amendments.

**CLAIM OBJECTIONS**

Claim 24 was objected to due to a minor informality which has been corrected as noted in the Action by changing the dependency to claim 23. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection to claim 24 is respectfully requested.

**ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER**

In the Action, the Examiner indicated that claims 23 and 24 had only been objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. In response, claim 23 has been rewritten in independent form. Accordingly, claims 23 and 24 should now be allowed.

**CLAIM REJECTIONS – 35 U.S.C. §102**

Claims 1-4, 11-18, 20-22, 27 and 29-33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as anticipated by U.S. 2004/0074623 to Bartelmuss et al. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

As amended, claim 1 is directed to a cover for a vacuum dewatering box which includes a plurality of blocks, each including a wear surface. The blocks are arranged in at least one cross direction (CD) row and are spaced apart from one another in the cross direction to form at least one generally CD oriented non-linear shaped continuous or discontinuous slot through the cover in which no straight linear CD slot path is

defined in the CD that extends across the cover. A shape and size of at least one slot is determined by at least one of a location of and a shape of the blocks. See the arrangement of the present invention below.

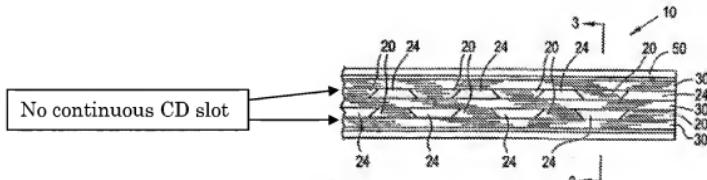
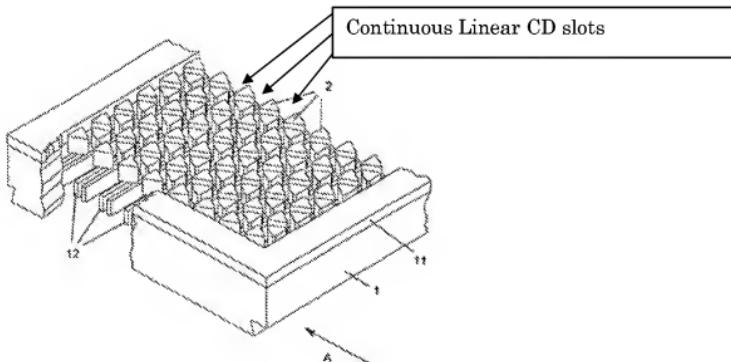


FIG. 1

Bartlemuss et al. discloses a vacuum detwatering apparatus for a papermaking machine. However, as indicated in Figures 1-3, each of the arrangements defined by Bartlemuss et al. result in a straight linear CD slot path defined in the CD across the cover. See Figure 1 of Bartlemuss below.



This does not provide the advantages of the present invention in which only a non-linear shaped continuous or discontinuous slot is provided through the cover in which no straight linear CD slot path is defined. This provides advantages in connection with detwatering of fabrics as they are carried across the cover and reduces seam wear of the papermaking fabric.

Claims 2-5, 8-11 and 13-14 depend from claim 1 and should be similarly patentable over Bartlemuss et al. for the reasons noted above in connection with claim 1.

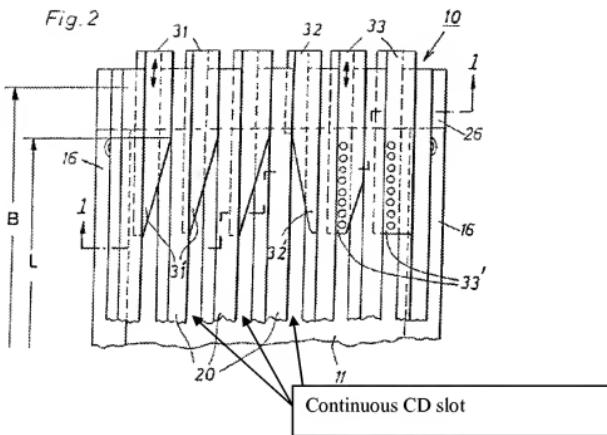
With respect to claim 15, this claim is directed to a vacuum detwatering box for a papermaking machine including a cover as described above in connection with claim 1, in which the blocks are used to define a generally CD oriented non-linear shaped continuous or discontinuous slot in communication with the interior of the box in which no straight linear CD slot path is defined in the CD that extends across the cover. In view of this difference, it is submitted that claim 15 is similarly patentable over Bartlemuss et al.

Claims 16-20, 22-28 and 31-33 depend directly or indirectly from claim 15 and should be similarly patentable.

In view of the foregoing, withdrawal of the Section 102 rejection in view of Bartlemuss et al. is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 5-10, 15, 25-26 and 28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by U.S. 5,858,175 to Feiler. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Feiler is directed to a suction box in which fillers (31, 32, 33) are inserted between the support strips (20), with the fillers being located at least at one end of the slot but usually at both ends. See column 2, lines 57-58 and Figures 1 and 2. There is no suggestion or disclosure in this reference of providing a generally CD oriented non-linear shaped continuous or discontinuous slot in communication with the interior of the box in which no straight linear CD slot path is defined in the CD that extends across the cover. In Feiler, each slot is defined as a straight linear slot. See below.



Accordingly, independent claims 1 and 15 as discussed above would both define over this reference. As claims 8-10 depend from claim 1 and claims 25, 26 and 28 depend from claim 15, these claims should be similarly patentable over this reference. Accordingly, withdrawal of the Section 102 rejection in view of Feiler is respectfully requested.

CLAIM REJECTIONS – 35 U.S.C. §103

Claim 19 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as unpatentable over the combination of Bartlemuss et al. and U.S. 3,928,125 to Poeschel. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Poeschel is cited as disclosing a plurality of spaces along contact units which engage with a moving wire, in which the contact elements consist of hard ceramic at

the contacting surface. However, Poeschel does not address any of the above-noted deficiencies with respect to Bartlemuss et al. Accordingly, claim 19 should be patentable for the same reasons as noted above in connection with claim 15.

**CONCLUSION**

If the Examiner believes that any additional minor formal matters need to be addressed in order to place the present application in condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone at the Examiner's convenience so that these can be resolved.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that the present application, including claims 1-5, 8-11, 13-20, 22-28 and 31-33, is in condition for allowance, and a Notice to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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